

workbook

u.s army europe civilian personnel directorate



NATIONAL SECURITY PERSONNEL SYSTEM

DoD is creating a new Human Resources System for civilians

With the passage of the 2004 National Defense Authorization Act, Congress gave the Department of Defense (DoD) the authority to establish a new human resources management system for DoD civilians. Known as the National Security Personnel System (NSPS), DoD is creating a new framework of rules, regulations, and processes to govern the way civilians are hired, compensated, promoted, and disciplined in the Department.

Employees can expect significant changes from the current General Schedule classification and pay system (fifteen grade levels with

More Changes With NSPS

by Jeannie Davis, Director, Civilian Personnel Directorate

Hello, all. Well, it seems that every time I write one of these newsletter articles, it's about change. Well, it's about change again. The Department of Defense (DOD) is facing BIG change in its civilian personnel systems, under the umbrella of the National Security Personnel System (NSPS). This system, discussed briefly to the left of this article, was designed and passed into law with the intent to create a more flexible system to support our nation at war. You may remember hearing Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld, in the news, talking about the concerns he had in deploying military forces and being bound on the civilian side by outdated regulations. This feeling is not new; many senior leaders have believed that the civil service system needs reform. Those of us who have been around a while will remember the forklift on the front lawn of the White House with stacks of regulations that were to have been abolished, in an effort to reduce red tape in civilian personnel rules.

Those of us in the civilian personnel business know that the only thing that was done was to reduce some of the redundancy, but that effort caused very few real changes or improvements.

It seems that things will really change this time. Instead of simplifying the current system, DOD intends to build an entirely new system, using pay banding, pay for performance, modified relationships with unions, and other major changes in the basic foundation of our systems. DOD civilians will no longer be in the same system as other federal employees. We are planning a special newsletter to provide more information about the changes, to be published as soon as good information is available as to the direction the system is taking. Until then, DOD has a website that provides the latest, and is a good starting point for interested readers - it's at <http://www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps/index.html>. And, since this will affect us all, I strongly recommend that we be interested readers. More to follow!

longevity-based step increases), to a new performance-based model that affords the opportunity for higher pay and rewards based on individual performance.

This new performance management system will ensure a meaningful link between pay and performance. NSPS also will bring more flexible and streamlined processes for recruiting and hiring, advancement and promotion, employee appeals, and reduction in force. DoD is developing a new labor management relations system to

foster a collaborative, issue-based approach for addressing and resolving labor management issues. The Department is phasing in the NSPS over the next two years, and will be training employees, supervisors, managers, and human resources professionals on the new rules.

Extensive information on the NSPS and its progress is located online at <http://www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps/index.html>.



TOOLS YOU USE Gatekeeper Update - PBD712

At the request of Headquarters Department of Army, the Gatekeeper Checklist has been modified in order to identify positions that are converted from military to civilian because of the Program Budget Decision 712 (PBD712). PBD712 authorizes many military positions to be converted to civilian in an effort to free up funds and military personnel.

Effective 16 Feb 2004, the following question was included in the Manager's portion of the Gatekeeper Checklist:

- Is this a Program Budget Decision (PBD) 712 military to civilian position? (Yes or No)

A report, titled PBD712, will be developed shortly to capture the number of RPAs associated with PBD 712. The report will be available in ART under the following menu items:

- o CPACs/Managers: Inbox Statistics 2
- o CPOC: My Stuff

Visit the website for more information on Gatekeeper.

Leave and Excused Absence Information for Spouses of Deployed Soldiers and Civilian Employees

In the coming months, many families will welcome loved ones returning from Operation Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom. USAREUR leadership encourages supervisors and managers to be sensitive to the needs of spouses and family members during the time of reintegration. Civilian employees will require time off for official welcome proceedings and reintegration activities. More importantly, civilian employees will want to spend as much time as possible with returning Soldiers or family members.

Following is a summary of the recent USAREUR guidance regarding leave for spouses of deployed Soldiers and civilian employees.

1. Supervisors should grant excused absence to spouses of deployed Soldiers and civilian employees to attend Family Readiness Group activities, when possible. They should not be charged leave nor lose pay.
2. A liberal leave policy is in effect for spouses of Soldiers and civilian employees who are in the Army Europe theater for rest and recuperation or block leave. Managers should approve requests for accrued annual leave and leave without pay unless this would adversely affect the mission.
3. Spouses of redeploying personnel will need time off to participate in official welcoming and reintegration activities. Managers should approve requests for excused absence for such proceedings, unless this would adversely affect the mission.

For more information, visit www.chrma.hqusareur.army.mil

CIVILIAN EMPLOYEES *reintegration*

the journey home is more than just the reunion

u.s. army, europe

re-in-te-gra-tion:
A renewing, or making
whole again.

A program designed to help soldiers, DAs,
civilians, and contractors returning
from Operation Iraqi Freedom or
Enduring Freedom reintegrate into
everyday life.



Civilian employees returning home from Operation Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom will likely encounter a number of adjustments. The new **Army in Europe Reintegration Program** helps employees ease back into their normal, everyday life.

The Reintegration Program is a

unique, structured itinerary that assists Operation Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom returnees with reintegration by focusing on souls, minds, and bodies.

The program begins for civilian employees in the deployed area with briefings and medical assessments that will prepare them for their return.

During the first week at their home station, employees may join Soldiers in seven half-days of briefings, medical assessments and updates; and re-inprocessing, as appropriate to their civilian duties. This half-day schedule allows Soldiers and civilian employees to slowly reintegrate with their families and friends, as well as accomplish a variety of designated unit and individual tasks.

Civilian employees may participate in the half-day schedule activities. However, they must spend the rest

of the day at work or they must take leave under an approved leave category. A liberal leave policy is in effect for these employees.

USAREUR also has authorized a liberal leave policy regarding leave after the initial reintegration phase. While the Army authorizes Soldiers up to 30 days of block leave, DoD does not grant civilian employees the same benefit. Supervisors and managers should consider the effects of an employee's absence on the mission, and be as flexible as possible to allow leave.

U.S. Army, Europe has developed a guide to help redeploying civilian employees, called the "Soldiers, Civilians, and Family Members' Reintegration Guide." It is available online at the USAREUR website, www.hqusareur.army.mil.



USAREUR ENCOURAGES FEDERAL EMPLOYEES UNDER FECA TO CHOOSE U.S. FACILITIES

Using U.S. Facilities for Worker's Compensation Related Issues Cuts Red Tape

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Recent USAREUR guidance encourages civilian employees with an on-the-job injury or illness to use Army healthcare facilities for treatment. Lieutenant General William E. Ward, Deputy Commanding General/Chief of Staff, recently signed a memo on Federal Employees' Compensation Act medical treatment policy for employees in Europe.

The memo emphasizes an employee's right to choose any licensed private physician (who is not on the list of excluded medical providers), but advocates for employees to use Army health care. By choosing Army facilities, employees face less red tape. Employees who choose to be treated off-post may experience a delay in reimbursement for costs associated with their injury, as all documents must be translated into English.

The memo, dated 27 January 2004, is located at the Army in Europe library at <https://www.aeaim.hqusareur.army.mil> under "AE Memorandums."

• 2004 • ANNUAL INCENTIVE AWARDS

*These awards offer the chance
to recognize great employees!*

The Commanding General's **Annual Incentive Awards Ceremony** is scheduled to take place 19 July 2004. This prestigious awards ceremony offers an excellent opportunity to recognize extraordinary performers for their noteworthy accomplishments in a number of special emphasis areas.

Each year, supervisors can nominate outstanding employees for one of 15 incentive award categories. The chain of command reviews the nominations and forwards the best nominee in each category to the Incentive Awards Review Board. The board, comprised of senior USAREUR officers and civilians, selects the winners.

Nominations are due to the proponent office for each award no later than 2 April 2004.

For nomination procedures, see Army in Europe Regulation 672-1 in the USAREUR publications library at <https://www.aeaim.hqusareur.army.mil/library>. For information on where to send nominations, visit the USAREUR publications library, circular 672-1.



PROHIBITED PERSONNEL PRACTICES

SUPERVISORS AND MANAGERS LOOKING FOR A NEW EMPLOYEE UNDERSTAND THE CHALLENGES ONE ENCOUNTERS DURING THE HIRING PROCESS. IT'S A GOOD IDEA FOR MANAGERS AND SUPERVISORS IN CHARGE OF PERSONNEL ACTIONS TO BECOME FAMILIAR WITH THE PROHIBITED PERSONNEL PRACTICES, AS DEFINED IN § 2302(B) OF TITLE 5 OF THE UNITED STATES CODE (U.S.C.).

The law provides that a federal employee authorized to take, direct others to take, recommend or approve any personnel action may not:

(1) discriminate against an employee or applicant based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, handicapping condition, marital status, or political affiliation;

(2) solicit or consider employment recommendations based on factors other than personal knowledge or records of job-related abilities or characteristics;

(3) coerce the political activity of any person;

(4) deceive or willfully obstruct anyone from competing for employment;

(5) influence anyone to withdraw from competition for any position so as to improve or injure the employment prospects of any other person;

(6) give an unauthorized preference or advantage to anyone so as to improve or injure the employment prospects of any particular employee or applicant;

(7) engage in nepotism (i.e., hire, promote, or advocate the hiring or promotion of relatives);

(8) engage in reprisal for whistleblowing - i.e., take, fail to take, or threaten to take or fail to take a personnel action because of any disclosure of information by the employee or applicant that the employee reasonably believes evi-

dences a violation of a law, rule or regulation. Examples include gross mismanagement; gross waste of funds; an abuse of authority; or a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety (if such disclosure is not barred by law and such information is not specifically required by Executive Order to be kept secret in the interest of national defense or the conduct of foreign affairs - if so restricted by law or Executive Order, the disclosure is only protected if made to the Special Counsel, the Inspector General, or comparable agency official);

(9) take, fail to take, or threaten to take or fail to take a personnel action against an employee or

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Managing Tour ROTATIONS

The decision to grant an employee a tour extension beyond three or five years requires advanced planning by supervisors and managers. It's important for managers to know the ins and outs of granting or denying an extension.

Managers and supervisors should be aware of each employee's overseas status prior to the decision period. At a minimum, the supervisor should:

- Make tour extension decisions approximately one year before the employee's DEROS date
- Maintain a roster to track employees' DEROS dates. The roster can be used to monitor tour extension decisions

To determine eligibility for an extension, supervisors must first consider the basics. For example, the individual being considered must have at least a fully successful performance rating. In addition, individuals must possess the knowledge, skills, and abilities required for the position, and must have successfully adapted to the overseas work and cultural environment.

If an employee is eligible for an extension, supervisors should carefully reflect on the following:

- How does this individual support the mission?
- Will there be continued employment for the individual throughout the extension period?
- Will an extension affect the placement of surplus employees?
- Will an extension cause the loss of return rights for the individual?
- Will an extension cause difficulty in recruiting for

and back-filling the position?

- Can this position be converted to an LN position?

Supervisors and managers must not base extension decisions on any of the following:

- An employee's history of filing complaints - reprisal is illegal!
- Intimidation (i.e. employee files or threatens to file a complaint if s/he is not extended)
- Substitution for a reward or disciplinary action
- Race, national origin, age, gender, or disability

NON-EXTENSIONS

When supervisors and managers decide not to extend an individual, it should be communicated to the employee with tact and discretion. However, supervisors and managers are not required to provide reasons for non-extension. Some other items to remember about non-extensions:

- Employees may not file a grievance under the Administrative Grievance System as a result of a non-extension
- Non-extensions (up to or beyond five years) do not require higher level approval
- Non-extended employees may exercise their return rights or register in the Priority Placement Program to be placed in a stateside position



MANAGERS MAY HIRE RETIRED MILITARY MEMBERS

WITHIN 180 DAYS OF RETIREMENT WITHOUT WAIVER

According to recent clarification from the Department of the Army civilian personnel office, as long as the national emergency is in effect, supervisors and managers may hire retired military members within 180 days of retirement without a waiver.

As stated in the Assistant Secretary of the Army, Manpower & Reserve Affairs memorandum issued on December 30, 2003, the national emergency is still in effect and supervisors may hire retired military members without the 180 day waiting period, if the new employees are GS-15 grade level (or equivalent) and below.

For more information on this issue, visit the Department of Army Civilian Personnel website at www.cpol.army.mil.



RETROACTIVE PAY INCREASE FOR FEDERAL WORKERS

On 3 March 2004, the President signed an Executive Order to implement a retroactive pay increase for Federal employees, averaging 4.1 percent above the 2003 rates, effective 11 January 2004. The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) issued a memo on the retroactive pay increase, of which 2.7 percent is an across-the-board increase to basic pay. The order allocates the rest of the pay increase to locality payments. This directive supersedes the 2004 pay increase previously implemented.

For more information, see the OPM Director's Memo at <http://www.opm.gov/oca/compmemo/2004/2004-05.asp>. The New 2004 Pay Tables are available online at <http://www.opm.gov/oca/04tables/index.asp>.



HELP KEEP THE PEACE

consider civilian employment downrange

The US Army Europe has job opportunities for civilians in fields such as Safety, Information Technology, Supply, Education, Security, Force Protection, and more. These are remote field positions, located in the Balkans, and the Army offers a generous compensation package that may include a relocation bonus, danger pay, or foreign post differential.



visit the human resources website at
<http://www.chrma.hqusareur.army.mil>
to find out more information
or call DSN 370-6986
or civilian 06221-57-6986

New Civilian Employee and Leader Development Plan



Recent transformation of the U.S. Army has led to force restructuring, repositioning, Base Realignments and Closures, outsourcing, and changes in roles, missions, and technology. These changes make it critical that civilian managers be prepared to respond to future needs and have the skills to effectively manage human and material resources.

In addition, the U.S. Government's civilian servants are rapidly aging and advancing towards retirement. As this progression occurs, the Government is losing valuable leadership in every area of the Federal workforce.

To combat these challenges, the Army in Europe is tackling the professional development needs of civilian workforce with a new **Civilian Employee and Leader Development Plan**.

The plan is part of General Bell's Command Policy Letter #25, Civilian Employee and Leader Development, dated December 2003. It outlines a three-year strategy to ensure the professional growth of the civilian workforce.

The HQ USAREUR G1, Civilian Personnel Directorate

(CPD) is responsible for implementation. Karen Quasny, a CPD HR Specialist, recently commented on the strategy's intent. She said, "This plan seeks to alter the entire culture for civilians to one of continuous learning, growth, and development. Leader devel-

opment must be continuous and ongoing. The three-year plan is part of a long-term vision for change and a means to better prepare our civilian leaders for future challenges."

Phase I of the plan establishes

a firm foundation for professional and leader development, including the establishment of a Civilian Leader Development Board (CLDB). The CLDB is comprised of representatives from HQ USAREUR, tenant commands, and career program managers. The Board seeks to identify, review, coordinate, and make recommendations on training and leader development issues affecting Army civilian employees in Europe.

According to Ms. Quasny, Command Policy Letter #25 was one of the most important accomplishments of Phase I. This letter emphasizes the importance of training civilian employees. Gen. Bell states that civilian employees are an important part of the workforce. He expects every commander and manager to ensure

"This plan seeks to alter the entire culture to one of continuous learning"

the professional development of civilians. He encourages civilian managers to be proficient in leading people and promoting change while providing effective communication, critical thinking, decision-making, and interpersonal relations.

To conclude Phase I of the plan, the civilian personnel website - www.chrma.hqusa.army.mil - has been expanded to include a new section called Civilian Professional and Leader Development. This addition provides extensive information on developing leadership competencies and individual development plans. It demonstrates how to do a self-assessment, provisions for tuition assistance, and much more.

Phase II emphasizes the application of leadership competencies, employee development through coaching and career planning, mentoring, and integrated military-civilian training and development.

Phase III stresses training and development through rotational assignments, on-the-job training, and the increased use of technology. Rotational assignments with on-the-job leader development will provide hands-on experience at lower grade levels.

Summing up the plan Ms. Quasny said, "The purpose is to contribute to the professional development of our civilian workforce on a continuous basis. Civilian employees must keep pace with Army transformation, plus the many other changes and challenges they face every day. We have an obligation to provide people with the leadership skills they need to meet current and future challenges. With this plan, we are taking the first steps towards accomplishing that goal."

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applicant for exercising an appeal, complaint, or grievance right; testifying for or assisting another in exercising such a right; cooperating with or disclosing information to the Special Counsel or to an Inspector General; or refusing to obey an order that would require the individual to violate a law;

managers and supervisors need to know what factors can influence hiring decisions and they should understand prohibited personnel practices.

(10) discriminate based on personal conduct which is not adverse to the on-the-job performance of an employee, applicant, or others;

(11) take or fail to take, recommend, or approve a personnel action if taking or failing to take such an action would violate a veterans' preference requirement; and

(12) take or fail to take a personnel action, if taking or failing to take action would violate any law, rule or regulation implementing or directly concerning merit system principles at 5 U.S.C. § 2301.

Avoiding prohibited personnel practices provides a firm basis upon which to base a justification, should that become necessary.

Individuals should remain conscious of merit system principles, prohibited personnel practices, and the problems that may arise by not keeping the legal requirements in mind.